

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY DACCA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6239

INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L DACCA 1559

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ASEC, BG

SUBJECT: KIDNAPPING OF DUTCH NATIONAL

REF: DACCA 1533

1. DUTCH CHARGE (W.A. DOLLEMAN) INFORMED ME LAST NIGHT THAT KIDNAPPED DUTCH NATIONAL NOT IN FACT TAKEN BY DACOITS (ROBBERS) AS HE HAD RELATED TUESDAY, BUT RATHER BY BDG SECURITY OFFICIALS ON GROUNDS VOLUNTEER WAS ILLEGALLY OPERATING RADIO EQUIPMENT AND PRESUMABLY ENGAGED IN ESPIONAGE. THIS "CLARIFICATION" PASSED TO DUTCH EMBASSY ONLY YESTERDAY MORNING BY BANGLADESH POLICE AND INSPECTOR GENERAL HAS PROMISED TO PERMIT DUTCH EMBASSY TO SEE DETAINEE THIS AFTERNOON.

2. DUTCH CHARGE ADDED: (A) YOUNG DUTCH VOLUNTEER WAS HAM RADIO OPERATOR, WITH EXPENSIVE EQUIPMENT, WHO PERSISTED IN PURSUING HIS INNOCENT HOBBY EVEN AFTER BDG REFUSED LICENSE TO OPERATE, (B) FOREGOING NOT KNOWN TO DUTCH EMBASSY WHICH WOULD HAVE PROHIBITED THIS BEHAVIOR AS HE IS TECHNICALLY AN OFFICIAL DUTCH EMPLOYEE, (C) POLICE AUTHORITIES REMOVED ALL CONTENTS OF VOLUNTEER'S APARTMENT BUT RADIO EQUIPMENT HAD ALREADY BEEN SHIPPED BACK TO NETHERLANDS AS VOLUNTEER'S TOUR
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OF DUTY WAS COMING TO A CLOSE.

3. DOLLEMAN OFFERED NO BETTER REASON FOR BDG POLICE ACTION AT THIS TIME THAN POSSIBILITY OF PRE-INDEPENDENCE DAY NERVOUSNESS AMONG SECURITY OFFICIALS. HE WAS BITTER ABOUT DUPLICITY OF OFFICIALS FOR UNNECESSARILY FABRICATING AN INITIAL ACCOUNT WHICH COULD NOT HOLD UP AND WHICH WAS ECHOED DURING EARLIER PART OF WEEK AT TOP LEVELS MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS WHOSE JUDGMENT AS WELL AS CREDIBILITY NOW SOMEWHAT COMPROMISED. DOLLEMAN SAID HE BEGAN TO DOUBT EARLY RENDITION WHEN POLICE GAVE CURIOUSLY CONFIDENT REASSURANCES OF VICTIM'S SAFETY AND INTIMATED KNOWLEDGE OF HIS WHEREABOUTS. NOW DOLLEMAN WORRIED LEST THEY FIND THEIR MAN MIGHT HAVE SUFFERED SOME ROUGH HANDLING BY BANGLADESH POLICE, A COMMON INTERROGATION TECHNIQUE AT LEAST WHEN DEALING WITH OWN NATIONALS.

4. COMMENT: ON THE BASIS OF DOLLEMAN'S INFORMATION ALONE, IT IS DIFFICULT TO FATHOM THE REASONS FOR BDG'S OSTENSIBLY INEPT HANDLING OF THIS CASE. THE DUTCH WILL ATTEMPT TODAY TO HELP THEM OFF THE HOOK BY URGING THAT THE VOLUNTEER MAN BE RELEASED AND QUIETLY PNG'D WITHOUT CHARGES. IF THIS IS NOT SUCCESSFUL, DOLLEMAN

SUGGESTS THAT SERIOUS CONSIDERATION WILL BE GIVEN TO THE FUTURE OF THEIR AID PROGRAM. MOREOVER, HE DOES NOT PRECLUDE ANTI-BDG PROTESTS THROUGH THE INTERNATIONAL PRESS FROM OTHER DUTCH VOLUNTEERS NOW IN BANGLADESH AS WELL AS CRITICISM FROM DUTCH POLITICIANS AT HOME. THIS IS HARDLY THE KIND OF PUBLICITY MUJIB NEEDS. CHESLAW

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